— Make a muslin sample as a test garment. Adjust pattern as needed.

— Try putting the zipper in by hand with a pick-stitch for a clean, couture finish. A pick-stitch is sewn by hand like a straight stitch except the distance between the stitches is less than the length of the stitch. When finished it resembles a machine-stitched line.

— To keep the French dart bias line from stretching, reinforce with lightweight woven interfacing.

— If needed, reinforce the waist, shoulder seams, and neckline with ¼" twill tape. Visit the SewDaily.com blog for more information.

— Clip curves and grade seams as needed.

— Finish seam allowances with preferred method. A Hong Kong finish is a seam allowance that is enclosed with bias strips, usually silk, a material whose fluidity keeps the seams from becoming too bulky. Serging, pinking, or zigzag stitching are also good seam finishes.

— Allow dress to hang 24 hours before hemming.

— All seam allowances are ½" unless otherwise indicated.

— RST= right sides together

— For explanations of terms and techniques, see Sewing Basics.

CUT + MARK + INTERFACE

1 Cut out all pieces as indicated on pattern.

2 Mark notches and darts.

3 Fuse interfacing to facing pieces according to manufacturer's directions.

STITCH BODICE

4 Stitch darts in Front and Back Bodice. Reinforce darts with fusible interfacing as needed.

5 Stitch shoulder and side seams of bodice.

6 Staystitch neckline and waistline of skirt and bodice. If your fabric has a lot of stretch, use twill tape to further stabilize. Cut the desired length and stitch just inside the seam allowance.

7 Stitch the Front and Back Facings at shoulder seams, leaving center back seam open.

8 Attach facing to dress neck, RST.

9 Understitch neckline seam and turn facing to inside, tacking facing shoulder seams to bodice shoulder seams. Finish facing edges with a zigzag stitch or as desired.[See Glossary in Sewing Basics.]

10 Stitch sleeve seams. Run a basting stitch around the sleeve cap from back to front notches on each sleeve. Ease sleeve cap to fit dress armhole.

11 Baste sleeves to armholes, RST, matching front and back notches, shoulder seams, and side seams. Stitch sleeves to armholes ¼" from edge. Stitch again using ½" seam allowance.

STITCH SKIRT

12 Stitch Skirt Front to Skirt Back at side seams.

13 Stitch Skirt Back seam up to the zipper opening as marked on pattern.

ATTACH BODICE TO SKIRT

14 Stitch bodice to skirt at waist.

15 Insert the invisible zipper following manufacturer's directions. *Optional:* sew zipper in by hand with a pick-stitch. Refer to Notes, above.

16 *Optional waist stay:* a waist stay acts as a stabilizer and helps prevent the garment from sliding up or down. To make a waist stay, use a 1" wide grosgrain ribbon. Cut to the desired waist measurement plus 1". Anchor the waist stay by stitching to the waistline seam. Fold each end under ½" and add a hook and eye. Handstitch the ribbon ends to the zipper tape.

HEM DRESS + SLEEVES

17 Hang dress for 24 hours before hemming.

18 To hem sleeves, press sleeve edge up ½", then ½" again. Blindstitch hem in place.

19 To hem the dress, pin or hand baste lace hem tape ¼" from right side edge of hem. Machine stitch lace in place. Turn up hem ½" press. Handstitch hem using a blindstitch.

AMBER EDEN *is the editor of* Stitch *and SewDaily.com. She loves all things sewing and is a lifer student at Fashion Institute of Technology. She lives between Boston and Huntington, New York, and has three fur children (two golden retrievers, plus a cat who thinks she is one) and a husband who dotes on each of them.*

VISIT THE SEWDAILY.COM BLOG!

Want to learn a snazzy, easy seam finish? Check out the Hong Kong finish on the **SewDaily.com** blog. You can also read more about the pick-stitch and waist stays.

The Business Edge

by **KATRIN VORBECK**

{from page **52**}

FABRIC

Light- to medium-weight suiting or wool blend [*shown:* dark gray wool blend of 55% wool, 45% polyester]. Suit fabrics or wool blends work best. Because of the curved seams with piping accents, solid-colored fabrics without pattern or direction are recommended. Fabric needed, in yd:

— 45": XS-2⅛, S-2⅛, M-2¼, L-2⅜, XL-2½

— 60": XS-1¼, S-1¼, M-1¼, L-1⅜, XL-2

— 1 fat quarter accent fabric of each of 2 colors, for piping [*shown:* quilting cottons. Fabric A: turquoise, Fabric B: lime green]. Cottons work well, but for a more elegant look, you may use silk or satin.

You may also replace fat quarters with readymade bias and cording, OR readymade piping [see amounts for each color in cutting list].

Lining in yd

— 45": XS/S—1⅛ yd, M–XL—1⅞

— 60": 1¼ for all sizes

A tailor's ham is an extremely helpful tool for pressing curved seams.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE PATTERN FOR THIS PROJECT AT SEWDAILY.COM

SIZE CHART

	Bust	Waist	Hip
XS	32-33"	25"	34½-35½"
S	34-35"	26-27"	36½-37½"
M	36-37½"	28-39½"	38½-40"
L	39-41½"	31-33½"	41½-43"
XL	42½-44½"	34½-36½"	45-47"

Center back length is 35½"

Shown in size Small

OTHER SUPPLIES

— Pattern, provided

— 4¾ yd piping cord, about ⅛" thick (omit if you are using readymade piping)

— Sewing thread to match fabrics

— 18" invisible zipper

— Tailor's chalk or fabric marker

— Scissors or rotary cutter

— Invisible zipper foot

— *Optional:* piping foot or zipper foot for your sewing machine

NOTES

— All seam allowances are ⅝" unless otherwise noted.

— Hem depth is 2".

— Press seams after every step.

— When pressing curved seams, a tailor's ham is helpful. If you don't own one, a hard stuffed pillow will do, but make sure it's heat resistant!

— For explanations of terms and techniques, see Sewing Basics.

— Pretreat the fabrics as the finished garment will be cleaned (wash, dry, iron, or dry-clean) to avoid shrinkage after the garment is sewn.

— As this dress has many seams, it is recommended to make a muslin first to check the fit. Because of the seam lines, this dress can be easily altered if your measurements are between sizes—or to make other adjustments for a better fit.

CUT THE FABRIC

1 Pin pattern pieces to fabrics as shown in the cutting layout. Transfer all pattern markings to the fabric.

From main fabric, cut on straight of grain, one each:

A—Right Front

B—Center Front

C—Left Front

D—Left Back

E—Center Back

F—Right Back

From lining, cut on straight of grain:

Front Lining on fold

Back Lining, 2 pieces

From piping fabrics, cut bias strips:

Fabric A: 1½ yd long, 1½" wide

Fabric B: 4 yd long, 1½" wide

Cut piping cord a few inches longer than each fabric strip.

Hand baste the back seam so that the piping matches perfectly.

PREPARE THE PIPING

2 Fold and very lightly press piping strips in half lengthwise, right side of fabric facing out. Insert the piping snugly into the fold of the prepared bias strip. Pin or baste prepared piping.

3 Using a piping or zipper foot, sew as close to the cord as possible, enclosing the cord in the strip. Use thread that matches the piping and a longer stitch length (3.5 – 4mm). Repeat with all piping strips.

SEW THE LINING

4 Sew all lining darts. Press bust darts down and waist darts toward center front.

5 With right sides facing, sew center back seam closed. Press seam open.

6 With right sides facing, sew the right side seam closed.

7 Sew the left side seam from notch to hem. Press both side seams open.

8 Pin a 3" hem in the lining and baste. Blindstitch hem.

Clip curved seams to allow the dress to hang smoothly.

SEW THE EXTERIOR

9 Serge or zigzag raw edges except the hem.

10 Sew dart on Piece D and press toward center back.

11 Pin Pieces D and E, right sides together. Stitch the center back seam. Press seam allowances open.

ADD THE PIPING

12 Baste piping to right side of the fabric along seam lines of the exterior pieces: piping A to Piece C, piping B to Pieces A and F. Align seam allowance of piping with the seam allowance of the exterior pieces. Tip: it's easier when you clip the fabric of the piping where it meets a convex (outside) curve. Just ease the fabric to concave (inside) curves.

13 Stitch the piped seams on the front and back sides closed. Tip: this might be the trickiest step, so take your time. Basting the seams makes it easier.

14 Clip seam allowances along curves. Depending on the thickness of your fabric you may want to trim the seam allowances of the piping.

15 Carefully press seam allowances to one side. Using thread to match the piping, topstitch about ⅛" away from piping, securing seam allowances. To reduce bulk, pull out piping cord a bit where the piping meets an edge (hem, armhole, shoulder) and cut it back so there's no cord in the piping fabric at the seam allowance.

COMPLETE THE EXTERIOR

16 Sew right side seam closed. Press seam allowances open.

17 Following manufacturer's directions, sew the zipper into the left side seam. Stitch seam below zipper and press seam allowances open.

18 From the right side, carefully sew a few stitches across the seam line where the zipper ends to lock the end of the zipper.

BAG THE LINING + FINISH THE DRESS

Bagging is the quickest way to line a dress (or jacket or vest). Once you have done it, you'll never go back to a different technique again!

19 With right sides together and the dress inside the lining, pin or baste the neckline and armholes of the lining and dress together. Do NOT close shoulder seams!

20 Sew around armholes and neckline. Begin and end sewing at the shoulder seam allowances at the zipper. Clip and trim seam allowances around the neckline and armholes.

21 Slide your hand through the shoulder seams, grab the hem, and slowly turn the dress inside out. Press seam allowances toward lining, then press lining into dress.

22 Turn everything inside out again. Reach through the openings in the shoulder seams of the lining and with right sides facing, sew shoulder seams of exterior fabric closed. Press seams open.

23 Sew shoulder seams of lining closed by hand. Press.

24 Sew left-hand seam allowances of lining to zipper tape by hand or by machine.

25 Serge or zigzag around hem edge of dress.

26 Hem dress. As the seam allowances and the piping add some bulk, a single-fold, blindstitched hem is recommended.

Have fun wearing it!

KATRIN VORBECK *is a passionate sewist—always learning and exploring. It's the small details and the simple design features that she loves most. An admitted fiberholic and bookworm, her sewing and knitting library is just as big as her stash. Visit her badly neglected blog at sew-mad.blogspot.com.*

sweet!

Look for our WINTER ISSUE of *Stitch*. Packed with **30+ fabulous projects!** on sale **AUGUST 2012**